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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/664,383	09/17/2003	Michael Paul Gividen	F3317(C)	4419
201	7590	01/24/2006	EXAMINER	
UNILEVER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP 700 SYLVAN AVENUE, BLDG C2 SOUTH ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, NJ 07632-3100			ALEXANDER, REGINALD	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1761	

DATE MAILED: 01/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/664,383

Applicant(s)

GIVIDEN ET AL.

Examiner

Reginald L. Alexander

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,5,10,13 and 14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,4,5,10,13 and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **DETAILED ACTION**

In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 14 December 2005, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. New grounds of rejection are set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:

Milton Cano.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 10, 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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In claim 10, at line 3 it is unclear what structural arrangement is being described by the statement "first portion located on the first portion" (see amendment filed 5/20/2005).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1, 5, 10 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Portman et al. '099.

There is disclosed in Portman a container for serving infused liquid beverages made from infusion bags 15 having a string 17 and tag 20 attached, the container comprising a receptacle 11 for holding liquid, a lid 21 for the receptacle provided with an opening 61, 62 having a first portion 61 which is capable of gripping the string of the infusion bag and a second portion (opening formed between a gripping member)

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located on the first portion (see figures 8A, 8B) through which the string of the infusion bag can move into and out of the container (albeit tightly), and a dispensing outlet 91 through which the consumer drinks the beverage wherein the first portion comprises a first slit 62 with further slits 61 that extend at right angles therefrom and that are aligned with the second portion.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Portman et al. '099 in view of Yip.

There is disclosed in Portman a container for serving infused liquid beverages made from infusion bags having a string and tag attached, the container comprising a receptacle 11 for holding liquid, a lid 21 for the receptacle provided with an opening having a first portion (slits) 47 which are capable of gripping the string of the infusion bag and a second portion (aperture) 61, located on the first portion, through which the string of the infusion bag can move, and a dispensing outlet 91 in the lid, wherein the first portion comprises a plurality of slits which are aligned with the aperture and extend at angles therefrom.

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Yip discloses a tea bag string gripping member (figures 5l, 5m) having a first portion comprising a first slit with further slits that extend at right angles therefrom, and a second portion (aperture) located on the first portion.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to modify the slits of Portman with that disclosed in Yip, in order to provide an alternative arrangement for gripping the string.

Claims 4 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Portman et al. '099 in view of Portman et al. '670.

Portman '099 discloses a first slit with further slits extending at right angles therefrom for gripping a tea bag string.

There is disclosed in Portman '670 the use of an aperture 61 and aligned slits 47 (see figure 1C) to grip a tea bag string.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to provide the string gripping arrangement of Portman '099 with the circular aperture taught in Portman '670, in order to allow for a more free flowing passage of the string.

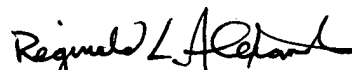
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Reginald L. Alexander whose telephone number is 571-272-1395. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on 571-272-1398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

rla  
January 18, 2005

  
Reginald L. Alexander  
Primary Examiner  
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